

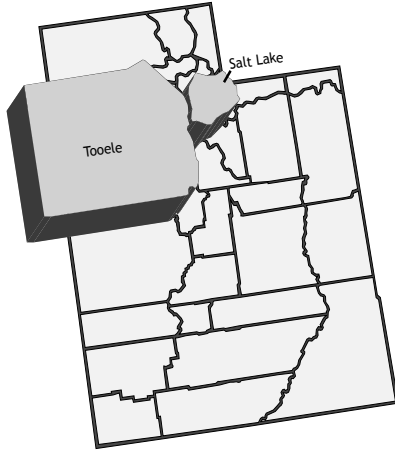
# Workforce News



A quarterly publication of the Department of Workforce Services: issued March 2009

**Wasatch Front South: Salt Lake, Tooele**

**jobs.utah.gov**



## Population a Regional Strength

### Inside:

- **Salt Lake:** The population of Salt Lake County grew 14 percent over the past eight years.
- **Tooele:** Since 2000, Tooele County had 16,665 more inhabitants- an increase of 40.1 percent



Contact the author, your regional economist, with any questions on content:

Jim Robson  
801-526-9626  
jrobson@utah.gov



The labor market and economic situation in the nation, in the state of Utah, and in the Central Region (Salt Lake and Tooele Counties) are currently in recession. Home prices and construction continue to fall, credit is tight for consumers and industry, retail sales are down, more businesses are reducing jobs than are hiring, and unemployment is rising. Consumer confidence is very low and business has cut back on investments. It is not possible to know precisely when this economic contraction will end and economic growth will resume. Yet, there are characteristics of the Central Region and the state as a whole that position this area for the expansion that will come.

*(continued)*

Subscribe to this newsletter and other information: go to <http://jobs.utah.gov/wi> , then click on "sign up" in third box

# Population (continued)

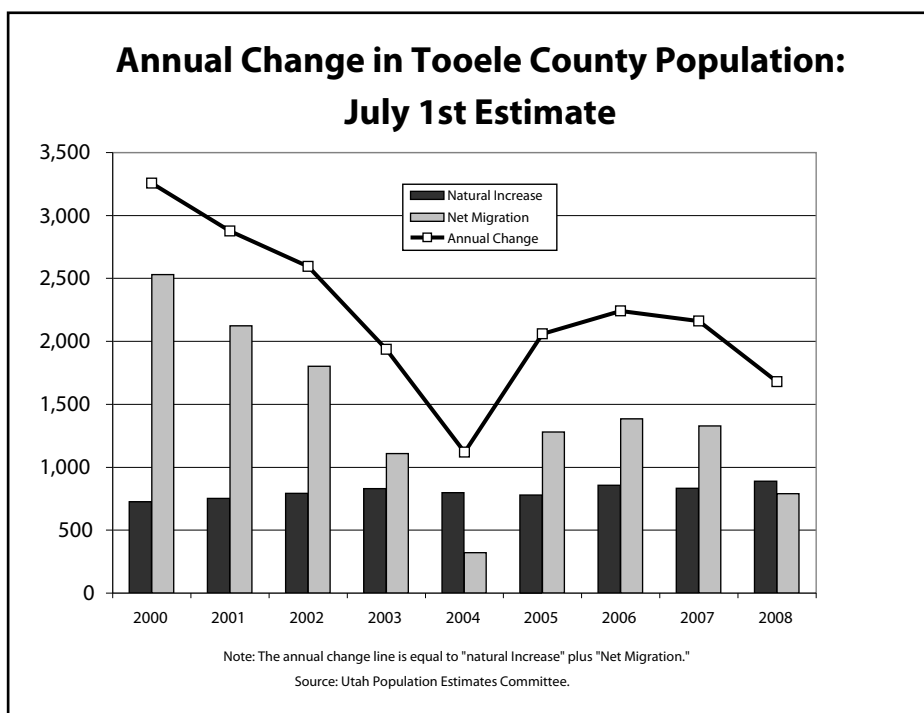
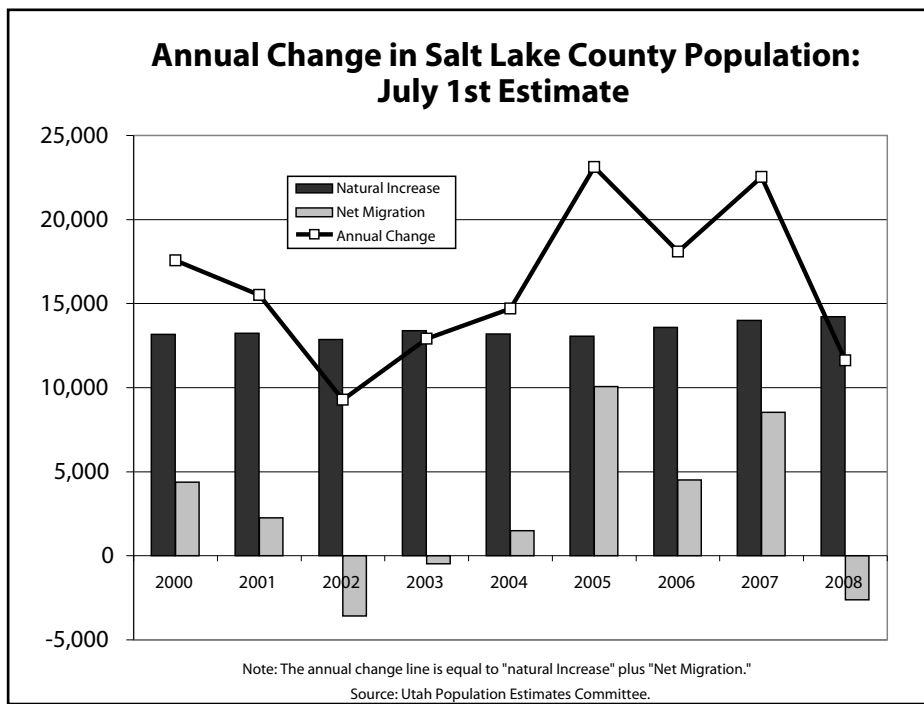
Utah workers are known to be productive with a strong work ethic, are on average the youngest in the nation, and value education and training. Utah fosters a favorable business environment that includes low business taxes, pro-business regulation, and low energy prices. Workers and businesses benefit from the vast recreation and cultural opportunities and amenities found within the state.

One important quality found within most Utah regions that has supported economic health throughout the state's history is strong population growth. Of course, the Central Region includes the state's most populous county—Salt Lake—with 37.4 percent of its residents, and Tooele County that is increasingly tied to the capital city and is one of the fastest growing areas of the state.

According to the Utah Population Estimates Committee, the Central Region's population reached 1,088,733 on July 1st, 2008, an increase of 13,293 above the population estimate one year ago. This year-over gain of 1.2 percent was the smallest growth in annual population since 2002, when the region was emerging from the 2001 "dot-com" recession.

Annual changes in population are measured as mid-year estimates as of July 1st and are comprised of two components: natural increase and net migration. In 2008, there were a record number of births in the twelve months prior to July 1st—20,768 in the Central Region, up 1.3 percent from 2007. Deaths in the area were 5,648. The resulting natural increase,

(continued)



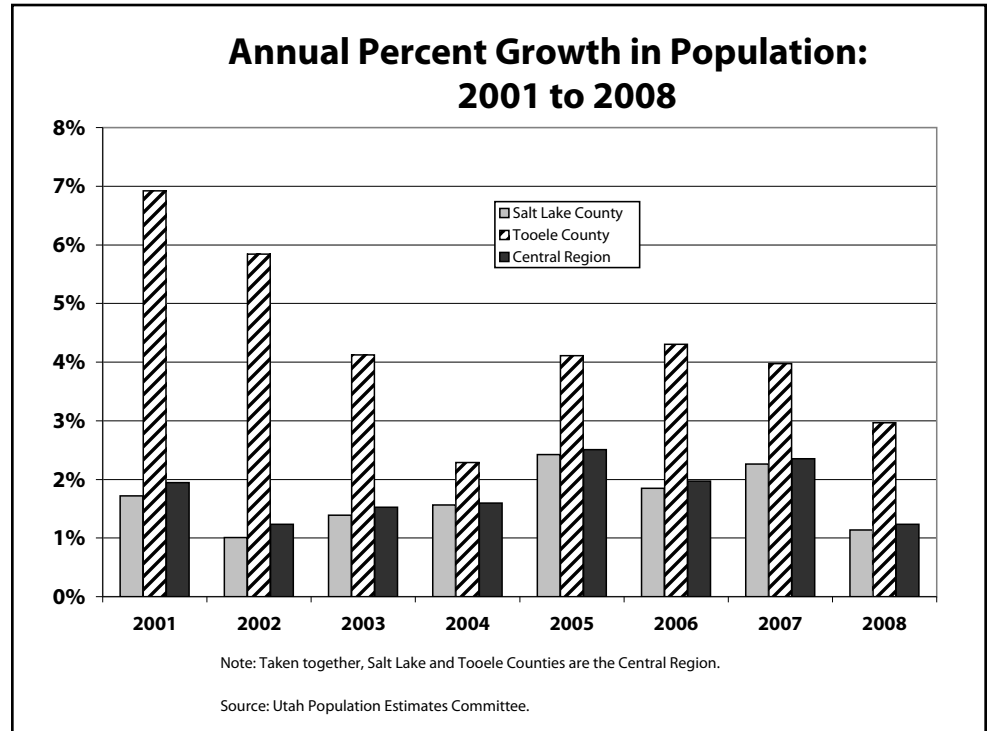
births minus deaths, was 15,120 persons. This is the highest level of natural increase recorded for the Central Region and marks the first time it has exceeded 15,000.

Net migration, the difference between the number of people moving into the region (in-migration) and the number of people moving out of the area (out-migration) for the twelve months prior to July 1st, is the other component of annual population change. For 2008, net migration was a negative 1,827, with that many more people leaving the region than the number of people moving into the area. Since 2000, the only other year there was net out-migration was in 2002, again seemingly correlated with the last recession.

From 2000 to 2008, the population of the Central Region has increased by 15.3 percent, from 944,326 in 2000 to 1,088,733 in 2008. Over this eight-year period, there have been 157,890 births and 43,805 deaths—resulting in natural increase of 114,085 or 79 percent of population growth. Total net in-migration of 30,322 for the eight years comprises the other 21 percent of population growth.

### Salt Lake County

The population of Salt Lake County grew 14.1 percent from July 1, 2000 to July 1, 2008. In 2000 there were 901,777 residents, growing by 127,742 to reach 1,030,519 by 2008. Natural increase accounted for 84 percent of the growth at 107,552 (149,405 births minus 41,853 deaths) over eight years. Total net in-migra-



tion of 20,190 comprises the other 16 percent in population growth. In the last eight years, Salt Lake County has averaged 1.7 percent growth each year.

2008 was less than average with an increase of just 1.1 percent. Natural increase for 2008 was 14,231, while there was net out-migration of 2,616 and a total change in population of 11,615 more residents.

### Tooele County

Tooele County is growing much faster than Salt Lake County. The population grew by 40.1 percent from July 1, 2000 to July 1, 2008. In 2000 there were 41,549 residents, growing by 16,665 to reach 58,214 by 2008. Natural increase accounted for 39 percent of the growth at 6,533 (8,485 births minus 1,952 deaths) over eight years. Total net in-migration of 10,132 comprises the other 61 percent in

population growth. In the last eight years, Tooele County has averaged 4.3 percent growth each year.

2008 was less than average with an increase of 3.0 percent. Natural increase for 2008 was 889 while there was net in-migration of 789—a total change in population of 1,678.

The Central Region, and Utah as a whole, has a naturally increasing population. Demographically these regions are younger (with women having higher fertility rates than nationally), households on average are larger, and residents survive to older ages. Over the long run, while there are periods of out-migration, more people move into this region than move out. This positive population growth dynamic supports the greater-than-average economic growth that these regions continue to display across the decades. **WFN**

# County News

## Salt Lake County

2008 was the year of a slowing economy in Salt Lake County, with recessionary conditions in full display during the fourth quarter—October through December 2008. County unemployment began the year at a remarkably low rate of 2.9 percent. A rate considered to be below “full employment,” given normal turnover of people moving in and out of the labor market, where all workers could find a job. Throughout the year unemployment has increased gradually, reaching 4.1 percent on a seasonally adjusted basis by December 2008. In December there were approximately 562,000 residents of Salt Lake County in the labor force, with about 22,800 unemployed. Comparable figures for January 2008 were 550,000 people in the labor force and 16,700 residents unemployed.

With unemployment rates gradually increasing, the rate of job growth declining through the year, and net job losses all along the Wasatch Front in the final quarter of 2008, employers have found the number of job seekers increasing quite dramatically, making it much easier to recruit workers.

By September of 2008, year-over employment declines in Salt Lake County were found in many important industries including construction, manufacturing, information services, and financial activities. With most other major industries slowing, there was essentially no job growth. In September 2008, there were 605,931 jobs in the county, just 542 more than recorded in September 2007.

## Tooele County

Tooele County unemployment also started 2008 at a very favorable rate of 3.4 percent, which is considered below “full employment.” During the year it has trended gradually higher, reaching 4.4 percent on a seasonally adjusted basis by December 2008. In December there were approximately 27,960 Tooele County residents in the labor force, with about 1,230 unemployed. Comparable figures for January 2008 were 27,550 people in the labor force and 930 residents unemployed.

For the first nine months of 2008, year-over job growth was quite anemic by recent standards for Tooele County. In September 2008, there were year-over job losses in federal government employment, construction, warehousing, and accommodation and food services that worked against gains in other major industry groups. In September 2008, there were 15,651 jobs in the county, just 13 more than recorded in September 2007. **WFN**

### For more info:

For more employment information about your county go to: <http://jobs.utah.gov/countyinfo>

Select your county, then go to Labor Market Indicators in the right-hand margin.

# What's Up?

**Zions Bancorp.** reported a fourth-quarter loss of \$483 million because of rising defaults on real estate loans and the declining value of securities. The lender had previously weathered the financial crisis better than its competitors by avoiding the riskiest types of loans. To bolster capital and its ability to lend, Zions this month sold \$255 million of government-backed notes under the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation's guarantee program. Zions also won approval in October to receive \$1.4 billion as part of the U.S. Treasury's Troubled Asset Relief Program.

— *Deseret News*

The Salt Lake office of CB Richard Ellis reported that the 2008 year-end **office vacancy rate for Salt Lake County increased** to 13.7 percent (excluding sublease space), up from 12 percent compared to 2007. As of Dec. 31, there was roughly 4.5 million square feet of available office space in Salt Lake County, up from 3.9 million square feet in 2007. Net absorption of office space in Salt Lake County ended the year at 325,404 square feet, down from 1,417,792 million square feet absorbed at year-end 2007. Net absorption is the total square footage of leases minus the space vacated by former tenants. It is seen by real estate professionals as an important indicator of what businesses are doing, whether they are growing or contracting.

— *The Salt Lake Tribune*

About 1.2 million fewer passengers used the **Salt Lake City International Airport** in 2008 than in 2007, according to figures released by the airport. In 2008, the Salt Lake airport, which is the 23rd largest in the United States, served 20.8 million travelers, compared with 22 million passengers served in 2007. The report's month-to-month breakdown shows that airport travel decreased as the nation's economy declined.

— *Deseret News*

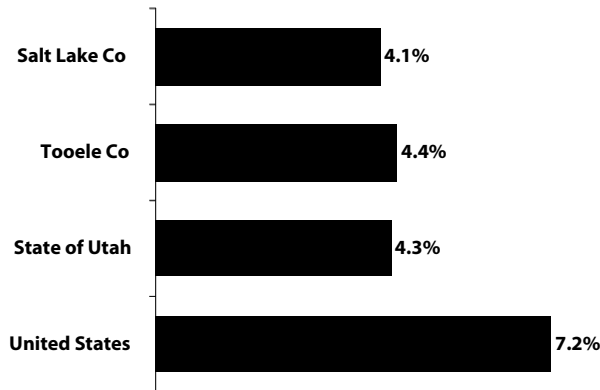
**Bankruptcy filings** in Utah increased 47 percent in 2008 compared to 2007, and financial experts say that a combination of foreclosures, medical bills, and lost jobs are likely to blame. Statewide, 9,256 bankruptcies were filed in 2008, a significant jump from the previous year's 6,284, according to year-end numbers provided by David Sime, clerk of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Utah.

— *Deseret News*

Despite a struggling economy, the **Tooele Army Depot** is reporting an upswing in its business. The depot's operating budget increased from \$67.2 million in 2007 to \$68.7 million in 2008. Although the increase only amounts to about 2 percent, depot officials say it's significant because it means the depot is being utilized by the Department of Defense more for shipping, receiving, storing and maintenance of conventional ammunition. In addition, officials say private partnerships are on the increase as well.

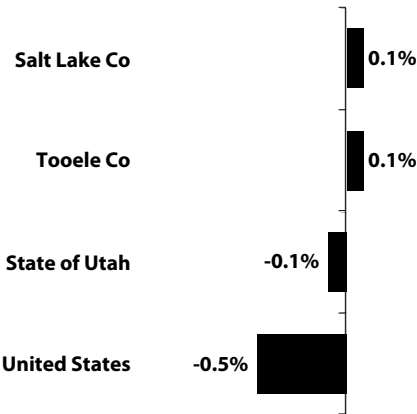
— *Tooele Transcript Bulletin*

**Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates  
December 2008**



Source: Utah Dept. of Workforce Services; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

**Percent Change in Nonfarm Jobs  
September 2007 to September 2008**



Source: Utah Dept. of Workforce Services; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

03-51WS-0309